

CLEAN UP THE GARBAGE - SAVE MT EVEREST



This year brings ground-breaking results for the 'Save Mt Everest Campaign', which aims to collect all the garbage left by summiteers and mountaineers who gather there to conquer the world's highest mountain.

Reaching the top of the highest mountain presents for many a restless temptation; conquering **Mount Everest is one of the ultimate mountaineer dreams and every year 35,000 people visit the region accompanied by 80,000 porters**, according to the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation.

While such heroic efforts are certainly worthy of praise and adoration, what many people do not realize, is tons of waste and garbage are left behind along the way. Many foreign visitors have raised the issue and thanks to a combined effort, the campaign 'Save Mt Everest' has started.

29 Sherpas took on the challenging task of collecting all that has been left behind and carrying it back down to Namche, the base camp. Needless to say, such effort is heroic, considering the setting and sub-zero temperatures.

An astounding 8 tons of metric waste has been brought back to Namche. The garbage varies from pipes, old ropes and tents, to plastic bottles, empty oxygen bottles, food, and medicine, not to mention bodies of those who never make it.

The end of the campaign is nowhere near in site, considering a further 20 tons of rubbish still remains, according to some estimates. **The campaign will continue, claiming some \$780,000. Its aims feature not only the cleanup efforts, but subsequent waste management and recycling as well.**

While initiatives and organizations like Eco Everest Expedition or the Everest Summiteers Association are working hard to preserve this UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Nepalese government will need to focus more on enforcing garbage laws. Mt Everest is a very unique place and there is absolutely no doubt about the need for its protection.

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